2019-20 access and participation plan monitoring

Provider impact report

This impact report summarises the progress made by University of Oxford against targets, objectives and written commitments set out in its 2019-20 access and participation plan. This document is a summary of information submitted by the provider to the OfS. This document is a self-report by the provider only and does not indicate any OfS assessment of compliance.

1. Ambition and strategy

University of Oxford's ambition and strategy as detailed in the 2019-20 access and participation plan:

Oxford's aims are: to attract applications from all individuals with the potential to study at the University; to inform them fully; to admit the very best; to educate them in an intensive, world-class teaching system; and to support them while at Oxford and in their progression to graduate study or employment.

We know that widening access to the University is the area where we have most progress to make. Based on the assessment of our performance, our future targets to widen access will focus on under-represented groups from under-privileged backgrounds. However, Oxford is also committed to understanding and tackling the small but persistent gaps in on-course attainment by women and BAME students.

The strategy to support Oxford's aim to widen access includes the expansion by 500 additional places of the independently evaluated and successful UNIQ summers school from summer 2019. The summer school will be enhanced by a new programme called UNIQ digital, which will ensure sustained-support, through virtual means, with the summer school participants.

We realise that prior attainment at school is a barrier to accessing selective universities for some students. Oxford is responding to this by targeting specific schools to support them in raising attainment levels, helping students to realise their aspirations and make a competitive application to Oxford and other selective universities. Students from these schools will be supported to progress on to the UNIQ programme and then, if they wish, apply to Oxford. The sustained contact with hub schools will help schools to embed good practice across the school and thus realise benefits for future generations of school students.

Oxford is also committed to working collaboratively at national, local and regional level with other higher education institutions, educational charities, and other third-party organisations in support of its widening access and participation goals, to share best practice, maximise impact, and reduce duplication of effort. Current collaborative partners include: IntoUniversity; Target Oxbridge; Future Leaders; Oxford student societies including the African and Caribbean Society, the Islamic Society, and the Pakistani society; Study Higher NCOP with Oxford Brookes, University of Reading, Bucks New University; Advancing Access; the University of Cambridge; the Russell Group; and The Ordered Universe collaborative project.

The Student Union is committed to fair access and coordinates a number of activities that contribute to the University's access agenda, such as the Target Schools Shadowing Scheme (https://www.oxfordsu.org/communities/targetschools/) which targets prospective students from schools with limited history of Oxford applications. Also, supporting under represented students while on course through the Class Act Campaign (https://www.oxfordsu.org/campaigns/classact/) and Campaign for Racial Awareness and Equality (https://www.oxfordsu.org/campaigns/10479/). In addition the University works in collaboration with students to delivery our access aims and works closely with Oxford African and Caribbean Society, the Islamic Society and the Pakistani Society to name but a few.

Through our targeted and expanded outreach programmes, in conjunction with the use of contextualised information and the continuing review of our undergraduate admissions processes, we aim to ensure that academic potential from all backgrounds is recognised. It is our intention and expectation that Oxford's current positive trajectory to recruit students from under-represented and disadvantaged backgrounds will continue and increase.

2. Self-assessment of targets

The tables that follow provide a self-assessment by University of Oxford of progress against the targets approved in its 2019-20 access and participation plan.

Please note the tables contain only a summary of target milestones approved in 2019-20 access and participation plans. Full information can be found in **Table 8a – statistical targets and milestones** and **Table 8b – Other milestones and targets** of University of Oxford's 2019-20 access and participation plan.

Any optional commentary provided against the targets is given in Annex B.

Statistical targets and milestones

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16a_01 (Access)	Increase the percentage of UK undergraduate students at Oxford from schools and colleges which historically have limited progression to Oxford. [NB This revised target refers to a refined group of schools and colleges and comes into effect from 2017-18]	Other (please give details in Description column)	13%	15.3%	15.9%	Percentage	2019-20	17.2	Expected progress
T16a_02 (Access)	Increase the percentage of UK undergraduate students at Oxford from postcodes which demonstrate significant socio-economic disadvantage, as measured by ACORN postcode datasets [NB These milestones have been updated for 2017-18 onwards to reflect a more recent baseline]	Other (please give details in Description column)	7.7%	9.1%	9.5%	Percentage	2019-20	12.3	Expected progress
T16a_03 (Access)	Increase the percentage of UK undergraduate students at Oxford from postcodes which demonstrate low participation in Higher Education as measured by POLAR3 (quintiles 1 and 2) postcode datasets [NB This revised target is based on the newer POLAR3 dataset and comes into effect from 2017-18]	Other (please give details in Description column)	10.3%	12.2%	13%	Percentage	2019-20	14	Expected progress

T16a_04 (Access)	Ensure that the proportion of UK undergraduate students with declared disabilities or specific learning difficulties at the University does not drop below the current level [NB This updated target moves away from using the HEFCE benchmark and comes into effect from 2017-18].	Other (please give details in Description column)	8.8%	At least 8.8%	At least 8.8%	Percentage	2019-20	9.4	Expected progress
T16a_05 (Access)	Ensure that at least 55% of students working with the Oxford South-East IntoUniversity centre progress to higher education in 2019-20. [NB This is a new target and comes into effect from 2017-18]	Other (please give details in Description column)	50%	At least 50%	At least 55%	Percentage	2019-20	63	Expected progress

Other milestones and targets

Reference Number (lifecycle stage)	Description	Baseline year	Baseline data	2018-19 milestone	2019-20 milestone	Units of target	Comparison year	Actual performance in comparison year	Target self-assessment
T16b_01 (Access)	60% of those participating in the UNIQ summer schools make an application to Oxford, and 30% of those applying to receive an offer of a place.	Other (please give details in Description column)	53% application rate and 26% offer rate	N/A	N/A	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20		Limited progress
T16b_02 (Access)	Improve the participation, application, and success levels from schools and colleges who have had teachers attend the Regional Teacher Conferences, where these schools and college have either a limited numbers of qualified candidates or where there historically has been limited success in securing offers.	Other (please give details in Description column)	15% success rate	N/A	N/A	Percentage	2019-20	20.9	Expected progress
T16b_03 (Access)	Using contextual information in the admissions process to identify candidates who may be suitable to be interviewed on the basis of either time in care, or socio-economic and educational disadvantage. The expectation is that identified candidates would then achieve the same success rate in receiving offers as all applicants to Oxford from equivalent school or college sectors.	2012-13	19.9% success rate for flagged students compared with 24.5% for all UK domiciled applicants	N/A	N/A	N/A (see description / commentary)	2019-20		Expected progress

3. Investment commitments

3.1. Access and participation investment for the last audited year

Please note that some differences in predicted vs actual spend may be due to reporting differences between academic and financial years.

Financial year	2019-20		
	Predicted spend (£)	Actual spend (£)	Difference (ppt)
Access investment	£4,854,198.74	£5,071,000.00	4%
Financial Support	£7,603,000.00	£7,539,000.00	-1%

4. Action plan

Where progress was less than expected University of Oxford has made the following commitments to increase the rate of progress against their targets.

Reference Number	Steps that will be taken in the future to make expected progress against target
T16b_01	Oxford's current APP no longer includes this target, however we continue to moitor and evalute the UNIQ programme, including the application and offer rates. In future years of the programme there will be additional engagement before and after the residential element of the programme with the students and those who support them, namely teachers and family members. One of the aims of the additional engagement will be to encourage more participants from UNIQ to apply to Oxford, where it is right for the student.

5. Confirmation

University of Oxford confirms that:

Student engagement
Have you worked with your students to help them complete the access and participation plan monitoring student submission?
No
Have you engaged with your student body in the design, evaluation, and monitoring of the plan?
Yes
Verification and sign off
University of Oxford has confirmed that the information included in this impact report is accurate, that it has been compiled in line with OfS guidance, and that it is being submitted on behalf of the governing body of the provider.
Yes
Accountable officer sign off

Name	Professor Martin Williams
Position	Pro Vice-Chancellor (Education)

Annex A: Commentary on progress against targets

University of Oxford's commentary where progress against targets was less than expected.

Target reference number: T16b_01
How have you met the commitments in your plan related to this target?
We have exceeded the offer rate aspect of the target (31.9% vs a target of 30%). We have not met the application rate aspect of the target (54.3% vs 60%). This is partially due to the improvements made to the programme that included expanding overall numbers and recuiting students from even more disadvantaged backgrounds, and this impacted on the application rate but not the essential offer rate. In raw numbers, there were 745 UNIQ applicants and 250 UNIQ offers in 2019-20 compared with 507 and 200 respectively the previous year (and 491 and 170 the year prior to that).
Have you taken any additional steps other than that detailed in the plan to reach the selected milestone?
The UNIQ programme is subject to ongoing evaluation and we have made improvements to the programme that include increasing the participation of students from even more disadvantaged backgrounds compared with previous years. This accounts for the trends observed in 2019-20. UNIQ participants who don't apply to Oxford normally apply to other high tariff HEPs (e.g. Cambridge University) and this is a successful outcome for all concerned.

Annex B: Optional commentary on targets

University of Oxford's commentary on any of the targets listed in Section 2.

Reference Number	Optional commentary
T16a_01	
T16a_02	
T16a_03	
T16a_04	
T16a_05	
T16b_01	54.3% of those participating in UNIQ 2019 applied to Oxford in October 2019 and 31.9% of those applying received an offer in January 2020. This is overall a good outcome when the offer rate is better than the offer rate for all students who apply to Oxford, and better than the offer rate for all UK students who applied to Oxford in the same year.
T16b_02	

T16b_03	The University has been using contextual data for a number of years to inform decision making in undergraduate admissions. The University changed its policy on the use of contextual data and flagging for 2020 entry UK-domiciled applicants. The new approach is much more granular than that which it replaced and was introduced to support more effective identification of under-represented and disadvantaged students. The new contextual data policy aligns with the admissions targets set out in the new Access and Participation Plan (APP) 2020-21 to 2024-25. Admissions coordinators and tutors are provided with comprehensive contextualised data about applicants to assist in assessing academic potential in the context of the applicant's education experience, and in making decisions about shortlisting and offers. This encompasses a range of indicators of disadvantage including school performance at KS4 and/or KS5, home postcodes (ACORN and POLAR4) and periods in care. The University also produces a contextualised GCSE score for all applicants with at least five GCSE results, comparing the candidate's performance with that of applicants from schools with similar Key Stage 4 performance. From the 2019-20 admissions round, a new composite measure of advantage and disadvantage was added, incorporating different aspects of disadvantage, and information was provided on individual students' level of disadvantage within their cohort. Further information about the University's use of contextual data can be found on our webpages (https://www.ox.ac.uk/admissions/undergraduate/applying-to-oxford/decisions/contextual-data). It is strongly recommended that all admitting tutors and staff involved in the admissions process complete contextual data training in preparation for the admissions round. Since the training was introduced in the 2019-20 admissions round 2750 users have completed the training and this represents roughly all tutors and staff involved in the admissions process.